

REMARKS

Applicants request reconsideration and allowance of the subject application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 1, 6-7, 9-13, 18-19, and 21-25 are pending in this application, with Claims 1 and 13 being independent. Claims 1, 6, 7, 12, 13, 18, 19, and 24 have been amended herein. No new matter has been added.

In the Office Action of April 16, 2004, independent Claims 1 and 13, along with certain dependent claims, were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,240,384 B1 ("Kagoshima"). The remaining dependent claims were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Kagoshima in various combinations with U.S. Patent No. 6,366,883 B1 ("Campbell"), U.S. Patent No. 5,913,193 ("Huang"), and U.S. Patent No. 6,490,563 B2 ("Hon").

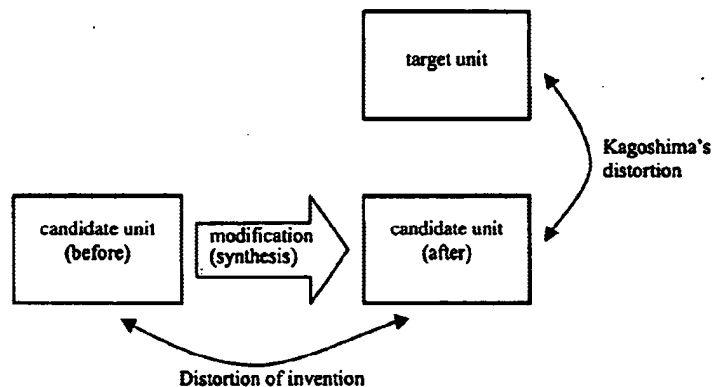
Applicants submit that the independent claims, as amended, patentably distinguish the invention over all of the cited art, and request reconsideration and withdrawal of the § 102-103 rejections.

Independent Claim 1 of the invention, as amended, recites (among other features) distortion obtaining means for obtaining a respective modification distortion for each of a plurality of synthesis units, each respective modification distortion being a distortion between a respective unmodified individual synthesis unit and the individual synthesis unit after modification. Independent Claim 13, as amended, includes a corresponding distortion obtaining step. Applicants submit that the independent claims now even more clearly distinguish the invention over Kagoshima.

In particular, as discussed in detail in the Amendment of July 16, 2004, Kagoshima teaches preparation of two units, a candidate unit (before) and a target unit. Following the preparation, the candidate unit (before) is synthesized in accordance with the prosody held by the target unit, and a candidate unit (after) is generated. Then, the difference between the candidate unit (after) and the target unit is defined as a "distortion."

Applicants submit that the claimed invention is patentably distinguishable over Kagoshima at least because each respective modification distortion of the invention, obtained by a distortion obtaining means or in a distortion obtaining step, is a distortion between a respective unmodified individual synthesis unit and the individual synthesis unit after modification.

Applicants submit the following exemplary diagram to illustrate this distinction between Kagoshima and the claimed invention:



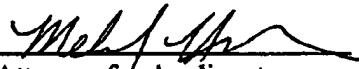
Kagoshima is thus submitted not to teach or suggest at least the distortion obtaining means and step of the claimed invention. Applicants submit that the other cited art fails to compensate for this deficiency of Kagoshima with respect to the claimed invention.

The dependent claims are also submitted to be allowable, for the same reasons that the base claims from which they depend are allowable, and further due to the additional features that they recite. Individual consideration of each dependent claim is respectfully requested.

Applicants submit that the application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration of the claims and passage to issue of the application at the Examiner's earliest convenience are requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in Washington, D.C. by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to the address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,


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